





# California a Republican State.

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*Address to the Republicans of California, by JOHN F. SWIFT, late candidate for Governor. ( He reviews the Campaign of 1886, and invites the party to organize and unite for the Presidential election. He declares that the State is Republican by 15,000 majority—The outlook for success in the coming Presidential contest excellent—The Republicans will elect the next President. )*

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*To the Republicans of California :*

The time has arrived for Republicans to set about organizing for the coming Presidential election. Having been defeated, as your candidate for Governor, at the last State election, and the Democrats making this result the ground for a claim that the State is Democratic, or at least doubtful, I deem it my duty to address you thus early in the campaign, lest my silence should be construed as an acquiescence in the claim, and to a want of faith in the triumph of our candidates and principles at the election next November. I dispute the claim most decidedly.

This is not a Democratic State, nor was it so in 1886, except as the result of a conjunction of factitious incidents that ought not to have occurred then, and not in the least likely to occur again. That the defeat of a portion of our ticket in 1886 was due to preventable causes, only adds to the chagrin of Republicans at such a result.

The most important of these was the accidental, and, I trust, temporary, diversion of some six thousand votes, the

riod is reached in American development that the public interest demands a cessation of immigration, it should be accomplished by direct and specific laws prohibiting it in terms.

In my opinion, it would be unwise to repeal our naturalization laws while permitting free and unlimited immigration. Such a system would not stop the coming of the undesirable classes, but would operate directly in the contrary direction. The good people, the honorable and the high-spirited, would stay away, while the ignorant, the brutal and the vicious would come quite as much as ever.

But, it may be said, these last-named, without the elective franchise, could do us no harm, for they would have no voice in our affairs. But is this true? Can a non-voting population do us no mischief? Do men wait for their certificates of naturalization before entering upon such work as their mental or physical habits fit them for?

Agassiz began his noble work of educating our people and the world as soon as he landed on our shores. But in the same way John Most sets about his special and mischievous occupation without waiting for so much as his first papers.

The Anarchists of Chicago needed no naturalization certificates as a prerequisite to their work of destruction and murder. Repealing the Naturalization Acts would not keep the professional beggar from coming among us to ply his trade. Non-citizenship has no terrors for him. The miserable starveling pauper of Europe is willing to come under contract to underwork our American laborers, not because of any wish for the suffrage. He would come all the same though assured that he might never vote nor hold office. The Chinese force their way into the country without a thought of citizenship. If depriving them of the vote annuls or mitigates the evil of undesirable population why exclude the Mongolian? The mischiefs of a disfranchised population settled in the heart of the body



politic are infinite. Volumes could be written upon the subject without enumerating them all. But it is enough to say that free popular government is incompatible with such conditions.

It seems to me that any man not good enough to become a citizen should not be allowed to settle in the country, but should be kept out altogether.

But while both the right and the propriety of discussing these questions are clear, as well as that of acting upon them when the proper time comes, yet it is neither honorable nor fair play between man and man to make such discussion the vehicle of insult and contumely to our adopted fellow-citizens who have, upon the invitation of the founders of the Republic, left their native land to come among us, nor have we the moral right to withhold or impair privileges already extended to them.

Above all things, it is wrong to stir up, under any pretense, that latent religious prejudice that unfortunately lies only too near the surface in the breasts of the gentlest and most humane of men.

To do this is distinctly to do an injury to the country under pretense of benefiting it.

Laws have already been passed, and are now in force, intended to restrict the coming of criminals, paupers and other undesirable people.

This was accomplished, as are most good political measures, by the Republican party before the American party of California was thought of. When other legislation is needed in the same direction, there is no doubt that it will be promoted by the same influences, and without stirring up strife between neighbors or setting citizen against citizen.

The Democratic party has hitherto had the support of the larger share of the foreign vote, but the Republican party has at all times held in its ranks a very respectable and intelligent minority of them. In the State of California we have always been able to count upon the votes of certainly

as many as 15,000 Hebrew, Catholic, and foreign-born citizens as a regular party force, at the very least. Indeed, it is likely that 20,000 would be much nearer the mark.

At any rate, it will hardly be disputed that if for any reason we should lose that vote, we could not hope to carry any election at which such a result should occur.

It is true that we have no right to sacrifice any principle in order to hold this vote, but we have the right, and it is our duty, to recognize their just rights as citizens and as members of the party in good standing along with the others.

It is our duty, when their already acquired rights are attacked or called in question, that we disconnect ourselves as a party from such attack and pledge them our support in what the Constitution and the laws have accorded to them. This is not demagoguery, but simple justice.

These being my views, when the San Francisco *Argonaut* in 1886, after I received the Republican nomination for Governor, undertook to place me in a position where my election would be made to appear a special vindication and triumph for that journal in the course it has so long marked out for itself in attacking Catholics, Hebrews, and naturalized citizens, and to brand the Republican party, through its candidate, with the stamp of these opinions, I conceived it to be my duty to refuse to be placed in such a position, or to be used for such a purpose, and declined in terms that were intended to be firm yet respectful to accept the nomination.

I will briefly summarize the facts, showing how Republicans were misled and a portion of our ticket defeated:

Several months previous to the election of 1886 a meeting was held at Fresno City to form an American party.

The Hon. P. D. Wigginton, a gentleman of decided prominence in the State, a Democrat of recognized standing, and an ex-member of Congress, was the leader and prime mover.

A Convention was called to be held on the 2d day of

October, 1886, at Fresno City, to nominate an American State ticket.

Three weeks before the meeting of the Fresno Convention, without warning, I was surprised by finding in the columns of the San Francisco *Argonaut* an editorial article presenting my name as a candidate for Governor at the head of a ticket which purported to be an American ticket, upon a platform expressing the well-known views of that journal, not emanating from the Fresno party of Mr. Wigginton and his colleagues, but selected by twelve gentlemen (names not given) friends of the *Argonaut*, which article assumed to speak authoritatively as to the opinions of the candidates so nominated.

On the same ticket were placed a portion of my Republican co-nominees, along with a part of the Democratic candidates. Several of my associates were not so nominated.

The article declared substantially that these candidates “represented the idea of Americans of native birth being first entitled to enjoy the offices of the country,” to the exclusion of citizens by adoption.

It further proceeded to declare (I quote literally)—

“That a person born abroad, who came to the country young, who does not acknowledge the right of the Pope to exercise civil authority in any country, or of the Roman Catholic Church to interfere in the politics of the United States of America, who does not believe in papal infallibility, who was educated in the public schools, and does not send his children to parochial schools, and is not an Irish Home-Rule agitator, who does not go to confession, and who only attends the Catholic Church when in good taste he cannot avoid it, is not regarded as ineligible to a place upon the American Ticket, provided, he is patriotic American of honorable conduct and specially qualified for the position designated.”  
—*S. F. Argonaut*, Sept. 18, 1886.

I am able to assert with considerable certainty, that there



had been at that time no communication between the editor of the *Argonaut* and Mr. Wigginton, touching any alliance or co-operation of forces.

But to place the matter beyond any sort of question, in the identical issue of the *Argonaut*, in which I found myself so unexpectedly nominated by it, namely, the number of September 18, 1886, appeared an editorial confirmation of this view. The following is a copy:

“In reply to numerous inquiries concerning the movement at Fresno, for an American Ticket, and whether we are co-operating with its movers, and whether it meets with our approval, we are compelled to say, that we know nothing of it, have not been advised concerning it, have not been informed of its organization, strength, or purpose, and know nothing concerning it other than what appears in public journals and what is contained in a recent circular sent to us, and which is generally distributed throughout the State.”  
—*S. F. Argonaut*, September 18, 1886.

On reading these two articles, I came to the conclusion, that both upon principle, and expediency, it was a duty I owed to myself, to the party, and to the rest of the ticket, to repudiate this sectarian nomination and its platform. I immediately prepared and sent off for publication, a letter which appeared in the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* the same evening declining the honor.

In giving my reasons for repudiating the nomination of the *San Francisco Argonaut*, I said, among other things, in the same direction as follows, viz:

“I believe that the policy adopted in the early days of the Republic of extending the right of citizenship to all Europeans, in order to encourage their coming hither, was wise policy, and I would not change it if I had the power.”

“I believe that Roman Catholics *and Jews*, are as loyal to Republican institutions, as Protestant Christians, or people of any other faith.”—*S. F. Chronicle*, September 19, 1886.  
*S. F. Bulletin*, September 18, 1886.



If I had said less than this, or believed less, I should have had no right to ask, or to expect the votes of the at least 15,000 Catholics, Hebrews, and naturalized citizens, who habitually vote with our party, who belong to it as part of its regular force, and whose votes are necessary to its success, at any election in this State.

Indeed, as an honest man, I had no right to accept their votes, if I felt towards them as the *Argonaut*, in its article nominating me substantially declared that I did feel.

In the very next issue of the *Argonaut*, viz: September 25, 1886, there appeared an article very sarcastic and hostile in tone, addressed to me, skillfully and ingeniously prepared, so as to give the impression that I had declined not the *Argonaut* nomination as was the fact, but the nomination of the American Party, and that I had done so in a spirit of demagoguery, in order to catch the Irish Catholic vote.

In the body of this article was published what purported to be a copy of my letter of declination, *but which carefully omitted and left out* the sentence in which I had placed *the Jews* along with the Catholics as being loyal to our institutions. The effect of this change, or omission, was to give the impression, as it was evidently intended to do, that I was imbued with some special sympathy toward members of the Catholic Church, that I did not feel towards the professors of other religious faiths, and thus strengthen the charge that I was acting the part of a demagogue with respect to the Irish Catholics.

From that time forward every means was taken by those in charge of the Fresno movement, to confuse the Republican voters as to what I had actually done, and to give currency to the charge directly stated by the *Argonaut* that I had been nominated by the Fresno Convention, had declined its support, had repudiated its platform, and that the nomination of Mr. Wigginton had been made simply to fill the place vacated by me.

In an article published in that journal on the 16th of October, this fact is asserted in direct terms. From it I quote the following:

“The Executive Committee of the American Party has contracted with the *Argonaut* for the issue of an extra and special edition of 50,000 numbers containing \* \* \* the correspondence between the editor of the *Argonaut* and the Hon. John F. Swift, the candidate of the Republican Party for Governor, *in which he repudiates the principles of the American Party, and declines to allow his name to be printed at the head of its ticket.*” \* \* \*—*S. F. Argonaut*, October 16, 1886.

This “contract” was carried out and 50,000 copies of my letter with the sentence about the Jews left out, *but purporting to be complete*, circulated over the State.

This statement was utterly insincere. I had not “repudiated the principles of the American Party,” as every leader and manager of that organization knew full well. I never laid eyes upon its platform till more than a week after Mr. Wigginton had been nominated. I had never declined to allow my name to be printed at the head of its ticket, as they all knew to a man. I had never had the ghost of a chance to get the nomination, if I had wanted it ever so much, as they knew. After Mr. Wigginton was nominated, as beyond question he had always intended to be, they concocted the story as part of the maneuver, that I had been written to and offered the nomination. Several days after the Fresno Convention had adjourned I received at San Bernardino a printed circular containing the party platform, but it bore the post-mark of a day subsequent to the adjournment. It was probably mailed at that late day to ease somebody’s conscience who intended to assert it had been sent to me. With that platform I could have had no quarrel. There was no reason for repudiating it.

There was nothing in it that the most stalwart Republican may not sincerely favor without ceasing to be a Republican,

and much that the best Republicans are strongly in favor of, indeed, that is good recognized Republican doctrine.

The Fresno American platform that I was falsely accused of repudiating was in substance as follows:

*Resolved*, "That all law-abiding citizens of the United States, whether native or foreign born, are political equals, and all citizens are entitled to and should receive the full protection of the laws."

*Resolved*, "That the naturalization laws of the United States should be unconditionally repealed."

*Resolved*, "That the soil of America should belong to Americans, and that no alien non-resident should be allowed to own real estate in the United States, and that the real possessions of all alien residents should be limited in value and area."

*Resolved*, "That all persons not in sympathy with our Government, should be prohibited from immigrating to these United States."

The remaining resolutions in the platform, of which there were six, were devoted respectively to "the teaching of trades to American boys and girls;" against "Bossism in politics;" in favor of "irrigation;" of "tax reform;" of "protection to American industries;" and of "education;" and each of these questions was treated in accordance to the well established principles of the Republican Party.—*S. F. Argonaut*, October 16, 1886.

The platform suggested no attack upon the legal or constitutional rights of any citizen or class of citizens, native or naturalized.

Not a word or hint was anywhere contained giving any expression for or against the Roman Catholics, the Jews, or upon any religious or sectarian question whatever. There was no reference to the propriety or to the impropriety of naturalized citizens holding or enjoying "the offices of the country," or suggesting that native born Americans should be preferred to them for that or for any political purpose. In a word it was as unlike the *Argonaut* platform upon



which I had been nominated as any two declaration of principles could well be.

It is no wonder that such Republicans as think the time is near or at hand for restricting general immigration should hesitate to support a candidate who had such hostile views on the subject as were thus unjustly and falsely attributed to me.

But this is not written to put anybody in the wrong or myself in the right. The matter has passed into history, and the personal part of it is of no further consequence. I wish that the truth be known, not for my own benefit, but for the benefit of the Republican party, in order to show that there is no just cause for any division in their ranks: in order to show the American party of last year that they properly belong with the old party, and not elsewhere, and not to defend my own action, which, having had the approval of my own judgment and conscience at the time, has no need of any defense.

But if I might be allowed to say a word in that behalf, it would be that what I did was necessary to the position of the party in the future, to show that it leaves every citizen the right to his own religious convictions, and that Republican Catholics, Republican Jews and Republican adopted citizens are not obliged to leave the Republican party in order to defend the rights and privileges the Constitution and laws of the land have guaranteed to them.

Viewing it in the mere light of immediate expediency, still it seems to me that I took the only course justifiable after the incident once became inevitable.

Remember that Mr. Wigginton had the control of the Fresno movement he had produced for his own purposes. He was an old-line Democrat. I did not know him, and all he knew of me was as a political antagonist who had always opposed him.

Mr. Bartlett, my opponent, was a Democrat of Mr. Wigginton's own strictest school. In addition to this bond of



affiliation, he had been an old-time "Know-Nothing." Would any Democrat, Southern or Northern, of Native American or "Know Nothing" proclivities, have left him for me, to please either the *Argonaut* or the Fresno Convention?

It seems to me reasonable that Mr. Wigginton would naturally hold his forces in hand so as to utilize them for his own advancement, and failing in that, then for the benefit of those most nearly to his own way of thinking.

That, admitting that it was no part of his scheme to become the nominee of his own convention, it was always certain that the nomination would be used for the advantage of his old associates in the Democratic party rather than to that of his opponents, the Republicans, and that it would in the end be turned to the benefit of Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Hearst, as it finally was; and that, had I accepted the *Argonaut's* nomination, I should have lost the enemies of that journal without gaining its friends, a combination of circumstances under which it is hardly likely that any candidate could have been elected in California at that time. Instead of 600, as the "*Argonaut*" candidate, under these conditions I must have been beaten 6,000 at least.

Although I made no suggestion or request to that effect, I thought in 1883, and think still, that all the Republican nominees who were named by the *Argonaut* as its candidates should have declined the honor. Had they done so, the entire Republican ticket would have been elected instead of only a part. By remaining on both tickets they contributed to the state of doubt and confusion that was so artfully worked up in the interest of Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Hearst, and which ended by losing a portion of the Republican ticket—6,000 good Republican votes, the most of them through this very confusion and misapprehension. I cannot believe that the Republican candidates who accepted the *Argonaut* nomination entertained the opinions with respect to naturalized citizens, Catholics and other religionists

of the journal that nominated them. And if they did, the Republican party, that had first nominated them, did not, does not, and these gentlemen had no right to hold both places unless they agreed with both. This they did, and in many instances contributed funds for campaign purposes to the leaders of the American party. It was a wrong to the Republican party, and however upright may have been the motive, was practically an act of bad faith, if not to all on the Republican ticket, certainly to all who did not get both nominations (as several did not). This seems to me to be too manifest for discussion. It was not only bad morals, but bad practical politics, and was one of the active and controlling causes that led to the defeat of part of the ticket and the jeopardy of the whole. Of course, any of them who hold that a naturalized citizen should not have an office as long as one of native birth can be found to take it, and that a Catholic, no matter how upright, honorable and patriotic, cannot be trusted unless he repudiates a cardinal tenet of his faith and refuses to go to mass, was justified in accepting the nomination; but I doubt if any had such opinion. If any do, it is not too late to speak even now.

For my part, I am proud to be able to say that, as the Republican candidate I upheld its highest principles, of the broadest toleration to all men in their religious opinions, and that the party has nothing to explain or apologize for in the coming campaign for anything I did or permitted.

I have made this statement for the benefit of Republicans in California and the East, to show what I feel and say is the fact, that our State is a Republican State. I offer it now as my deliberate opinion that nothing can prevent California from giving a majority for the Republican ticket of from twelve to fifteen thousand in November next. It is more likely to exceed than to fall short of this estimate.

In conclusion, I ask Republicans to lay aside all dissensions and disagreements for the common good, and come

together with the spirit of the glorious past, and victory is sure to result.

At no period since Grant's second term has the outlook for Republican success been so good as at this moment.

Our party was defeated in 1884 chiefly by that distrust and popular suspicion that is inevitable from long continued governmental responsibility. No party in the history of the country had ever been so long in office. "Let us look at the books," was the phrase that formulated this distrust. It was certain that sooner or later this feeling must produce a change of administration. The demand for a change of administration is almost the only measure in politics that requires no given reason in its support. It is always in order. The change came in 1884. The wonder is it did not come sooner. The country has seen the books, and since that time it is the Democrats who are on the defensive. Their chief claim to office seems to be that in three years they have held power they have not paid the Rebel debt, renewed the Rebellion, nor dissolved the Union.

Apparently it is such a surprise to the party that they have done none of these things, that until lately they seemed likely to go into the coming campaign upon the record of that astonishing fact alone.

But the Chief of the party has boldly and frankly resolved otherwise, and has tendered an issue that Republicans willingly accept.

I will not say in terms that President Cleveland is a Free Trader, for it is neither just nor courteous to call a man or a party by a name that he or it denies and repudiates, but he certainly attacks the protective system. That high tariff to which revenue is incidental and protection of home productions and American labor the leading purpose, which Republicans believe to be the actual cause and promoter of the unexampled prosperity of our country, a degree of prosperity that is the wonder and marvel of the age, and which we take pride in designating as the "American sys-



tem," is in deadly peril and must fight for its life, and the battle is now opening. In such a contest our State has a peculiar interest.

If the Republican party fails to carry the election, the farmers and fruit-growers, the vineyardists and wool-producers and lumbering men of California must divide profits with their rivals of Europe, Canada and Australia, or find some occupation that does not interfere with the interests of their competitors in those countries, for the Californian is not more highly thought of in the average Democratic Congress than are non-resident aliens.

But we shall not fail to carry the election. I am as confident of electing a Republican President in November as I am of carrying California.

If I do not greatly mistake the character and spirit of the six thousand Republicans who voted the American ticket in 1886, in such a contest they will be found standing in line with their old Republican comrades at the next election, defending the American system, and there I shall be glad to meet them and clasp hands.

In the effort the Republican party will make this coming summer and autumn to preserve that system which has already brought such prosperity to our State and to the nation, I shall take an active and earnest part. I shall canvass the State, and hope during the campaign to visit as much of it as possible, and to personally meet and converse with people, in public and private, upon all of these questions.

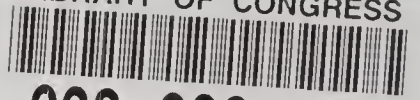
JOHN F. SWIFT.

824 VALENCIA ST.,  
SAN FRANCISCO, JANUARY 19, 1898.





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